United Nations E/ICEF/2005/13

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
18 July 2005

Original: English

For action

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Second regular session 2005
28-30 September 2005
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2006-2008

Summary

Since its establishment in 1988, the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (IRC) has made major contributions to socio-economic research and to increased understanding of children's rights. IRC generates knowledge and analysis to support policy formulation and advocacy in favour of children; acts as a convener and catalyst for knowledge-exchange and strategic reflections on children's concerns; strengthens the role of UNICEF as an intellectual leader and global advocate for children's rights; and supports programme development and capacity-building.

The proposed programme for 2006-2008 builds on these established areas of expertise, lessons learned during the current programme, recommendations made by the 2004-2005 evaluation of IRC, guidance provided by the Innocenti International Advisory Committee and consultations with key partners. Framed by the guiding principles of the medium-term strategic plan (MTSP) of UNICEF for 2006-2009, the programme promotes the role of IRC in the generation and dissemination of knowledge and cross-fertilization of experience to raise the profile of children's issues in national and international agendas. The programme will enable IRC, in cooperation with other UNICEF and United Nations partners, to contribute to the implementation of the Millennium Agenda.

The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the extension of the Centre's work for the period 2006-2008. A total allocation of $17 million in other resources is proposed, of which the Government of Italy has pledged to provide a minimum of EUR 5,430,000 (approximately $6.5 million) for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from donors for specific activities.

* E/ICEF/2005/10.

05-42737 (E) 110805

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–10	3
II.	Implementation of the current programme, 2003-2005	11–56	4
	A. Major achievements and challenges	12–13	4
	B. A centre of excellence for children's rights	14–43	5
	C. The Innocenti Research Centre as a resource for UNICEF	44–47	12
	D. Enhancing external partnerships to advance the cause of children	48–53	13
	E. Communication and the enhancement of donor support	54–56	14
III.	Proposed programme, 2006-2008	57–85	14
	A. Programme goals	59–60	15
	B. Generation and communication of strategic and influential knowledge	61–71	15
	C. Knowledge exchange and brokering	72	18
	D. Support to the advocacy, policy and programme development of UNICEF	73–74	19
	E. Securing and strengthening of the Centre's institutional and financial base	75–80	19
	F. Funding and staffing	81–85	20
IV.	Draft recommendation	86	21
Table			
	Estimated breakdown of expenditures (2006-2008)		22

I. Introduction

1. The Innocenti Research Centre was established in 1988 in Florence, Italy. Since then it has benefited from the steady support of the Government of Italy, on the basis of an Agreement of Cooperation with UNICEF. The Agreement is framed by Italian Law and is subject to renewal every three years. This time frame shapes the IRC three-year cycle programme and budget.

2. IRC works to strengthen the capacity of UNICEF, partner governments and institutions to respond to the evolving needs of children and to promote a strong global ethic for children. The Centre serves as an international knowledge source for the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in both developing and industrialized countries.

3. With its field-driven and policy-oriented research, the Centre informs UNICEF policy formulation, strengthens the role of UNICEF as a global advocate for children's rights, enhances the organization's capacity to research and learn from programme experience, and supports programme development and capacity-building. Operating with academic and intellectual freedom, the Centre addresses knowledge gaps and areas that are relatively new to UNICEF, thus strengthening the capacity of UNICEF to explore dimensions of its future agenda.

4. Building upon its previous work and in close cooperation with other UNICEF offices, IRC will continue to support the implementation of the MTSP, the guiding principles and areas of focus of which will frame IRC research.

5. IRC contributes to the intellectual leadership of UNICEF and partnerships for children and supports the follow-up process of the Millennium Agenda and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children.

6. The IRC Programme of Activities for 2006-2008 is founded on the Centre's mandate and accountabilities, the guidance provided by the Centre's International Advisory Committee (IAC), as well as by lessons learned during the 2003-2005 programme, including the findings and recommendations of the 2004-2005 evaluation of IRC, conducted at the request of the IAC.

7. The evaluation stressed the critical role of IRC research in informing the advocacy and policy work of UNICEF and recommended the enhancement of the role of IRC role in the generation and brokering of knowledge. It was also recommended that IRC deepen its partnerships with organizations and research institutions in the various regions, emphasizing partnerships in developing countries.

8. The MTSP for 2006-2009 gives prominent attention to the generation, dissemination and use of knowledge to inform the work of UNICEF and to influence policies and action for children worldwide. IRC will actively contribute to this process and serve as an interface between UNICEF programmatic experience, research networks and policy makers, while working to enhance its partnerships at the regional level.

9. The IRC also maintains an Agreement of Cooperation with the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, the host institution in Florence, which collaborates with IRC to promote children's rights and to enhance the visibility and strategic use of the joint Innocenti Library.

10. IRC receives funding from the Government of Italy for its core functions, with additional financial support for its research work provided by other governments, international institutions and the National Committees for UNICEF.

II. Implementation of the current programme, 2003-2005

11. The current programme was approved by the Executive Board for 2003-2005 (E/ICEF/2002/8/Rev.1, decision 2002/13). During this period, IRC pursued research on issues pertaining to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, assessing the impact of economic and social policies on children. The programme pursued four major goals:

(a) Establish IRC as a strategic and reinvigorated centre of excellence for children's rights;

(b) Enhance collaboration with UNICEF headquarters, field offices and National Committees for UNICEF;

(c) Serve as a catalyst with partners, including research and policy institutions and development agencies;

(d) Build a firm financial base through enhanced, and further diversified, donor support.

A. Major achievements and challenges

12. The evaluation of IRC work over the last three programme cycles assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability of IRC's activities. The evaluation pointed to several important results:

(a) IRC studies were used to influence strategic policy processes, within and beyond UNICEF;

(b) IRC studies benefited from partnerships and cross-disciplinary expertise in association with academics, policy makers and practitioners from partner countries, and UNICEF offices;

(c) IRC internal expertise has been consolidated in key areas (e.g., child poverty, child trafficking, and the legal and institutional dimensions of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child);

(d) Collaboration with UNICEF headquarters, regional and country offices and National Committees was further consolidated, and IRC participation in strategic processes such as the MTSP development was ensured;

(e) The financial resources of IRC were increased, its donor base was diversified and its budget ceiling, as approved by the Executive Board, was reached.

Strengthening action and policies for children through research

Efforts were made to enhance the strategic relevance of IRC studies to UNICEF action and the international children's policy agenda, as illustrated by these examples:

(a) The ongoing study of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been used to support and inform the process of legal and institutional reforms made by States and UNICEF action;

(b) Child poverty studies have informed the process of addressing social inclusion in the European Union (EU) and policy debate at the national level;

(c) The study, "*Child Trafficking in West Africa*" (*Innocenti Insight 9*, 2003), developed in the context of the EU/Africa dialogue, informed the development of the Plan of Action on trafficking in human beings of the African Union, endorsed in 2004, as well as the 2003 Resolution (and report) by the Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP)-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the EU Communication on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, developed in 2004-2005;

(d) The study, "*Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous Children*" (*Innocenti Digest 11*, 2004) has contributed to the thematic debate of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, has influenced policy discussions of the Ibero-American Summit in 2004-2005 and of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues; is used as a capacity-building tool for the EU; and was anchored in UNICEF country-level work and supported UNICEF programming;

(e) Research conducted on children in armed conflict laid a foundation for the development of the EU Guidelines on Children in Armed Conflict, adopted in December 2003 under the Italian presidency of the EU, informed the report of and resolution adopted by the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in October 2003 on child soldiers, and supports EU capacity-building activities.

13. At the same time, the Centre remained challenged in particular by (a) the need to balance its small size and limited capacity with high expectations for its research and knowledge-brokering functions; and (b) the need to secure core resources for its main research agenda and functions.

B. A centre of excellence for children's rights

14. IRC has served as a centre for reflection, debate and cross-fertilization of experiences on children's rights and as an interface between UNICEF field experience, academics, policy makers and operational actors. Drawing on work in the implementation of international standards on children's rights, the Centre has

helped to bridge normative and operational activities and to influence the international agenda to advance the cause of children.

15. Synergy was strengthened between the two areas of IRC research expertise: economic and social polices for children and the promotion and protection of children's rights. Studies completed on children with disabilities and on the impact of HIV/AIDS on children, together with research being conducted on resources for children, illustrated this process, which will be further strengthened in the new programme.

Monitoring the impact of economic and social policies on children

16. IRC pursued its evidence-based analysis of child-sensitive social and economic policies in developing and industrialized countries as part of the follow-up to the Special Session on Children and the Millennium Agenda. Child poverty has been identified as the focus for IRC analysis of economic and social policies, as poverty reduction is recognized as an international commitment relevant to rich as well as poor nations.

17. The Centre has continued to devote special attention to the situation of children in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States (CEE/CIS and the Baltic States region), including issues of widening disparities, the spread of HIV/AIDS among young people and high levels of infant mortality.

18. Research on **child poverty** contributed to the examination of this topic in *The State of the World's Children 2005* report, and it has also been addressed in depth in the IRC *Social Monitor* and *Report Cards* series, considering, respectively, the CEE/CIS and the Baltic States and countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). As a cross-cutting theme, poverty was further considered in child rights studies, including "Poverty and Exclusion among Urban Children" (*Innocenti Digest 10*, 2003) and "Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous Children" (*Innocenti Digest 11*, 2004).

19. The *Innocenti Social Monitor 2004* indicated that, in spite of some decline in absolute child poverty since the late 1990s, economic growth in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States has not benefited all children, whose numbers among the poor remain high. In some areas, poor children are less likely than others to survive infancy or to have access to quality social services, including health and education. Public spending in these two areas is very low in some of the poorer countries and areas. The report recommended further measures to protect children from poverty and an increase in investment in social services for children and their families.

20. "Child Poverty in Rich Countries" (*Innocenti Report Cards No. 6*, 2005) argued that rich countries should monitor and set goals for reducing child poverty and analysed the interplay of labour markets, demographics and public transfers and programmes in influencing levels of child poverty.

21. **The rapid expansion of HIV/AIDS in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States region,** accompanied by evidence that many young people lack basic knowledge on prevention, has prompted a growing policy response. The article "HIV/AIDS and young people: awareness, behaviour and policy", in *Innocenti Social Monitor 2002*, analysed how the lack of knowledge about the disease among young people and women, combined with discrimination against individuals with HIV, hindered an

effective response to the epidemic. The analysis was used as a tool for advocacy, for promoting awareness of HIV/AIDS in the region and for influencing policy makers.

22. Building on this study, "Young people and drugs: increasing health risks", an article in *Innocenti Social Monitor 2004*, highlighted the growth of injecting drug use in Central Asian countries, which leaves many young people highly vulnerable to HIV infection.

23. **Infant mortality and reporting on the Millennium Development Goals** was the focus of an in-depth analysis of the CEE/CIS and Baltic States, "Counting infant mortality and accounting for it", published in *Innocenti Social Monitor 2003*. Data suggested wide diversity between countries and significantly higher rates than officially reported in some of the very poor areas and countries. The research received wide international visibility and was used across the region to lobby for the adoption of an internationally agreed definition of live birth as well as for improved hospital procedures and better civil registration systems.

24. The TransMONEE public-use database of socio-economic indicators for 27 countries of the region has collected data for social and economic indicators from a network of correspondents in national statistical offices and various agencies since 1992. The data, which cover issues such as adoption and institutionalization of children not routinely collected by other international sources, have been critical to the support of evidence-based policy assessment of the impact of transition on the realization of children's rights.

25. The data from TransMONEE are also used by partners such as the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In May 2005, entities of United Nations agencies from the region joined with the IRC and other United Nations agencies in exploring ways to collaborate on monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals in the region while minimizing duplication and burdens on national statistical offices. Feasibility, costs and other dimensions are being reviewed, including implications for TransMONEE.

26. IRC will seek to build on the rich and participatory process of research on the situation of children in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States region and extend it to other regions and areas of research within the Centre, including on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and child protection.

Promoting the implementation of international standards and creating awareness of children's rights

27. IRC has developed thematic studies and advocacy tools to support the process of implementing international standards and increasing awareness of children's rights, and at the same time to influence policies and good governance for children. Particular emphasis was given to several areas: the identification of lessons learned in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; an improved understanding of children's protection; children's participation; and the role of the family in protecting children's rights.

28. **Documenting and identifying lessons from implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child** is being undertaken in a large-scale study, in line with recommendations made in *A World Fit for Children* (paragraph 31) and by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The ongoing study of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child addresses the

experiences of 62 countries across regions that have reported twice to the Committee. The analysis is based on expert consultations and a literature review of materials generated by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Committee, and on information received from UNICEF Offices, National Committees and relevant partners. The experiences, lessons and good practices identified will provide a basis on which to promote the further application of the Convention worldwide.

29. The main findings of the initial research, released during the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, have been used as an advocacy and policy tool to support child rights at the international and national levels, including in the establishment in 2005 of a National Council for Children's Rights in Timor-Leste. In response to a need identified for such research, IRC in 2006-2008 will conduct a more comprehensive analysis of the impact of implementation.

Progress and challenges in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child

The initial phase of the study on the implementation of the Convention has pointed to positive trends and areas requiring further work:

(a) *A critical process of law reform has been set in motion*. The Convention has been incorporated into the domestic law of more than half of the countries studied, and nearly a third of the countries have incorporated its provisions into their constitutions. Social change has been sustained not only by political commitment but also by comprehensive legal review, effective law enforcement, adequate resources and the involvement of all levels of society;

(b) *More than 60 independent national institutions for children's rights have been established* over the last 15 years in at least 38 countries. There is enhanced cooperation among these institutions, including through a European network and a global network supported by IRC;

(c) *Governmental mechanisms for the coordination of policy action for children have increased in number*, and in some cases involve the office of the president or prime minister. However, further efforts are needed to coordinate action between central and subnational authorities, bridge social and economic policies, narrow disparities and address the marginalization of the most vulnerable groups of children. National strategies must be established to address children as a distinct concern, including as part of follow-up to the Millennium Agenda.

30. **Translating commitments for children into subnational action** has been carried out through the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative (CFC), the secretariat of which is housed at IRC. The process has included a review of the positive experiences of systems of local governance for promoting and protecting children's

rights in line with commitments made at the Special Session on Children to place children at the centre of development agendas.

31. In consultation with UNICEF offices, United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners and international experts, the Centre developed a CFC Framework for Action and Toolkit for a child-friendly city and documentation of practical cases to inform action by local authorities, including the promotion of children's participation in municipal decision-making. The CFC tools have been widely translated and are managed through an interactive website. Their successful use is illustrated in the following examples: the rebuilding of Bam, Iran, into a child-friendly city following the earthquake of 2003; the use of CFC as a strategy for the Child Protection Initiative in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, with support from the World Bank and the Arab Urban Development Institute; and two studies in Italy and the Philippines highlighting successful partnerships of local governance with children in those countries.

32. Contribution to the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other international mechanisms concerned with children's rights has been enhanced. The Committee is represented on Innocenti's International Advisory Committee, is actively involved in the development of IRC studies, regularly participates in expert consultations, and has joined in the launch of a number of IRC studies. IRC research is used in support of the Committee's review of States Parties reports and informs its General Comments and Thematic Discussions on children's issues. The IRC study "The Evolving Capacities of the Child" (*Innocenti Insight 10*, 2005) informed discussion and contributed to the consideration of a future General Comment on early childhood development. IRC studies on child disability have built upon the recommendations in the Committee's Thematic Discussion on this topic, and current IRC research on mobilization of resources for implementation of the Convention has drawn from the General Comment on the General Measures of Implementation.

33. IRC work in the protection of children from violence is anchored in the Committee's Thematic Discussions of 2000 and 2001 and informs IRC collaboration with Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, appointed by the Secretary-General to lead the current United Nations Study on Violence against Children. IRC is a partner and member of the study's Editorial Board and has contributed research on specific issues, including on United Nations and European standards and mechanisms for the protection of children from all forms of violence and on female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). IRC has held expert consultations in support of the study, serving as a research hub for the development of global estimates on the incidence of violence against children.

34. The Centre has also promoted a close collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, appointed in 2004 by the Commission on Human Rights.

35. **Protection from discrimination and the promotion of social inclusion** has been explored in several studies. "Ensuring the Rights of Indigenous Children", mentioned above, considers patterns of extreme poverty, marginalization and vulnerability affecting indigenous children and reviews innovative strategies to protect the children's rights and cultural heritage. Developed in close cooperation with the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Committee on the Rights of the Child, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Labour Organization (ILO), representatives from

indigenous communities and UNICEF offices, the *Digest* is available in several languages and its main findings have been translated into 11 indigenous languages. Launched in Madrid, this study informed the Committee's thematic debate, the work of the Ibero-American Summit in 2004-2005 and the preliminary review in 2004 of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

36. The rights of children with disabilities were addressed in two IRC studies. The first, "Children and Disability in Transition in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States Region" (*Innocenti Insight 11*, 2005) analyses official statistics, changes to legislation, a review of medical and public health perspectives, and a summary of focus-group discussions that included children with disabilities, their parents and institutional caregivers. The study reveals that despite significant progress in changing attitudes and laws related to children with disabilities, more efforts are needed to protect the children's rights, including by promoting alternatives to institutional placement.

37. This study is complemented by an *Innocenti Digest* on the rights of children with disabilities, to be issued in 2005. Reviewing countries' differing levels of economic development and service provision, the study promotes an inclusive approach for children with disabilities, including in education, health and rehabilitation, play and cultural activities, and vocational and life-skills training.

Disparities in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States and the need for disaggregated data

In the region's transition to a market economy, the collapse of local economies and public services has widened disparities. Initial analysis by IRC of information received from 27 national statistical offices shows that disparities in per capita income between the richest and poorest populations have increased considerably since 1990. Capital cities and the resource-rich regions have gained the most, while many rural regions and those dependent on previously subsidized industries have fallen farthest behind and show a sharp increase in poverty rates for families and children. With the decentralization of social expenditures, local governments are increasingly dependent on local economies and, as a result, show wide gaps in levels of per-child spending, including on education.

38. **The protection of children from violence, armed conflict and trafficking** is another area of work that has contributed to implementation of the MTSP. Highlights of IRC research on violence were addressed earlier in this report. One key study that is serving as an advocacy tool, "Toward the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting," to be published as an *Innocenti Digest* in 2005, considers the practice in Africa, the Middle East and immigrant communities in the North and recommends action to end it.

39. **The protection of children during and after conflict,** an important dimension of the programme, is addressed in other sections of this report. In close collaboration with United Nations partners, relevant NGOs, research institutions and

the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, IRC promoted the development of the European Network for a Research Agenda on Children in Armed Conflict. Launched in July 2003, with the support of the Government of Italy, the network has helped to identify gaps in protection and priority areas for action and to promote a collaborative effort to address them. Informed through the network, a study titled "Birth Registration and Armed Conflict", to be published as an *Innocenti Insight* in 2005, demonstrates the importance of birth registration to establish children's legal identity during emergencies as a means of preventing under-age recruitment and promoting nation-building efforts.

40. **Child trafficking** has gained prominence in IRC's work in recent years. The Centre was closely involved with the development of the Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings, promoted in 2003 in the framework of the EU/Africa Summit and endorsed by the African Union the same year. This process was informed by the IRC study "Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children in Africa" (*Innocenti Insight 9*, 2003), launched in Benin in 2004, which presents a preliminary mapping of trafficking patterns in Africa and of emerging practices to prevent trafficking and protect child victims. IRC's research has also been used to support the region's follow-up to the Second World Congress on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, convened in December 2001 in Yokohama, Japan, as well as normative and policy work undertaken by the Council of Europe and EU institutions. Research being pursued in Europe and South Asia has informed a 2005 study, "Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation and Other Exploitative Purposes", a future *Innocenti Insight*. Research findings will support advocacy in prevention, victim protection, repatriation and reintegration processes.

41. The Centre acts as a research hub in trafficking, supported by the Innocenti Child Trafficking Research website. A comprehensive database that was developed has helped UNICEF to build enhanced partnerships with governmental authorities, parliamentarians, United Nations agencies (e.g., OHCHR, ILO, United Nations International Drug Control Programme, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute), international organizations (e.g., International Organization for Migration), NGOs (e.g., Save the Children; End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes; Terre des Hommes), regional institutions (e.g., Council of Europe and EU institutions), and academic institutions and networks (e.g., Childwatch). This wide alliance has been instrumental in advancing research, policy-making and advocacy.

42. **Child participation** was reflected in numerous areas of research, including "The Evolving Capacities of the Child", mentioned above. The study, anchored in article 5 of the Convention, considers developmental, participatory and protective dimensions relating to children. Another IRC study, "Adolescent programming experiences during conflict and post-conflict" (UNICEF Case Studies, June 2004), developed with the UNICEF Programme Division, determined that children and adolescents play an important role in community development and peace-building. IRC also supported the development of the child-friendly version of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report of Sierra Leone (see Box).

Child-friendly Truth and Reconciliation Commission report for Sierra Leone

Children were targeted for the worst possible abuses during the 10-year armed conflict in Sierra Leone. In post-conflict transition, however, children have become key actors in reconciliation. This is illustrated in the simpler, child-friendly version of the TRC report, the first of its kind, which represents the culmination of children's involvement throughout the TRC work. The report documents children's formal submissions and statement-taking, their participation in both closed and public hearings, and their participation in the preparation of the official report.

43. **The role of the family in the protection of children's rights** was analysed in the forthcoming study on children and HIV/AIDS (*Innocenti Insight 13*, 2005), which addresses the challenges presented by the family's weakening capacity to ensure the care and protection of children in the face of the epidemic. The study explores family-based alternative care, encourages community responses in building safety nets for children orphaned by AIDS and calls for priority attention for children and families affected by HIV/AIDS.

C. The Innocenti Research Centre as a resource for UNICEF

44. Cooperation has been steadily enhanced with other UNICEF offices and National Committees for UNICEF. IRC has particularly strengthened cooperation with members of the headquarters' Programme Group, including through the following: (a) contribution of research findings and perspectives to global Programme Group deliberations; (b) IRC inputs to global UNICEF strategy in the review of the current and draft new MTSP; (c) strategic collaboration with the Division of Policy and Planning in the promotion of global initiatives (e.g., child poverty and legislative reform), in policy analysis and in technical support to the field; (d) a contribution to global policy development, including in child protection, with Programme Division; and (e) cooperation with the Office of Emergency Programmes on issues related to children affected by armed conflict, transitional justice and the rule of law. IRC has also cooperated with the Office of Public Partnerships in global and regional alliances with parliamentarians, mayors and ombudspersons for children; with the Evaluation Office, and with the Division of Communication for global advocacy.

45. Collaboration with regional offices has also been enhanced, as for example, through the TransMONEE project on the CEE/CIS and Baltic States region. With the Regional Office for Europe and the Brussels Office, cooperation has included policy development and collaboration with EU institutions and the Council of Europe. In addition, cooperation frameworks have been developed with other UNICEF regional offices: with the Americas and Caribbean office (TACRO) on the realization of children's rights and economic and social policy areas; the Eastern and Southern Africa office (ESARO) on children affected by HIV and AIDS; the East Asia and Pacific office on child rights and migration; the MENA office on ending FGM/C and child trafficking; the South Asia office on child trafficking and

sexual exploitation; and the West and Central Africa office on child trafficking, children in armed conflict and FGM/C.

46. With the UNICEF National Committees, IRC has enhanced its partnership, in cooperation with the Geneva Regional Office, to inform advocacy and policy dialogue on children's rights in industrialized countries. Consultations, research partnerships, dissemination of IRC research and collaboration in selected advocacy activities have taken place, particularly in child trafficking, protection from violence and child poverty. In addition, National Committees have financially supported a wide range of studies.

47. Following the 2004 consultation in Dubai of UNICEF senior management and representatives, IRC and DPP convened a global meeting to develop a corporate strategy for enhancing socio-economic policy analysis and advocacy informed by children's rights. The meeting emphasized the importance of evidence-based and comparative analysis of the impact of social and economic trends and policy on children and the need to strengthen external alliances in this work. Recommendations substantively informed the development of focus area 5 in the MTSP for 2006-2009.

D. Enhancing external partnerships to advance the cause of children

48. IRC has worked with United Nations and intergovernmental partners to support policy development and capacity-building within the EU institutions, including in the context of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights and the work of the Forum on Children and Families of the Council of Europe. In socio-economic policy analysis, the Centre has collaborated widely. Researchers from the Luxembourg Income Study and the EUROMOD (integrated European tax-benefit model) network covering a wide range of academic institutions and OECD have contributed to IRC research on child poverty in industrialized countries. In January 2005, representatives from the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Child Poverty Research and Policy Centre, the Universities of Moscow and Florence, and the regional office for CEE/CIS and the Baltic States participated in the advisory meeting on research in that region, convened by IRC in Florence.

49. At the regional level, IRC has collaborated with numerous academic and research networks and policy institutions, an area to be enhanced in the next programme.

Collaboration with the *Istituto degli Innocenti* and other institutions in Italy

50. IRC continued to cooperate closely with the *Istituto degli Innocenti* in research, advocacy and awareness-raising. Activities focused on research on children in armed conflict and the further development of the joint Innocenti Library. The Library, inaugurated in 2001, contains research collections on children's rights worldwide and the results from studies conducted by the two institutions and their partners. Important steps have been taken to enhance its visibility and strategic relevance, including for the city of Florence and the Tuscany region in Italy.

51. Opportunities have emerged for IRC and the *Istituto* jointly to build capacity and serve as a learning centre. Study visits by UNICEF field offices and partners have been organized, enabling government officials and development practitioners to engage with *Istituto* colleagues and benefit from their studies and experience. The renewed Agreement of Cooperation between IRC and the *Istituto* in 2005 is expected to emphasize the expansion of the work of the Library and research cooperation.

52. A formal Agreement of Cooperation was signed in June 2004 with Italy's Tuscany Region, building upon a framework agreement with UNICEF in force since 1997. Under the Agreement, IRC and the Region organize relevant initiatives on children. Major IRC studies have been translated into Italian with the Region's financial support. The Region supports cooperation with UNICEF field offices and partners, including through study visits by high-level delegations. This cooperation has informed policy discussions on children and has promoted wider dissemination and use of IRC studies.

53. IRC has collaborated increasingly with the Italian National Committee for UNICEF on advocacy, having jointly organized a "Children First" advocacy event in Florence with major partners in December 2004, in the context of the "*Giornate per la Cooperazione*" (Days for Italian Development Cooperation) initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, IRC has worked with Italian NGOs on research and advocacy initiatives, including those on child trafficking and FGM/C.

E. Communication and the enhancement of donor support

54. Throughout the programme period, IRC continued to strengthen its communication and advocacy within and beyond UNICEF, achieving increased visibility and a widened range of strategic partnerships.

55. IRC has reached its approved programme budget ceiling (see section III) and continues to strengthen and diversify its donor support. In addition to the core contribution from the Government of Italy, funds for research on children's rights were provided by the Government of Sweden, and funding for specific research projects was received from other Governments, UNICEF National Committees, intergovernmental bodies and foundations.

56. Following the recommendations by the IAC and the evaluation of IRC, a long-term fund-raising strategy for the Centre is under preparation to support the implementation of the IRC programme for 2006-2008.

III. Proposed programme, 2006-2008

57. Guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the programme will (a) support the implementation of the MTSP, especially focus areas 4 and 5, on child protection and policy analysis, advocacy and partnerships, and contribute to national and international follow-up to the Special Session on Children, the Millennium Declaration and Agenda and the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals; and (b) identify and address emerging and sensitive issues affecting children. The Centre will enhance its partnerships at all levels, while securing and strengthening its institutional and financial base.

58. The programme for 2006-2008 will build upon IRC core expertise and lessons learned from past implementation, including the IRC evaluation. It will help consolidate the role of IRC as a centre of excellence, a resource for UNICEF and a catalyst among academics, policymakers and field practitioners.

A. Programme goals

59. The programme will pursue the following four goals:

(a) Generation and communication of strategic and influential knowledge on issues affecting children and the realization of their rights;

(b) Promotion of the exchange and brokering of knowledge to support reflection, debate and cross-fertilization of experiences;

(c) Support to the advocacy and policy and programme development of UNICEF, in the context of the MTSP and the contribution of UNICEF to the Millennium Agenda;

(d) Securing and strengthening of the Centre's institutional and financial base.

60. The achievement of the above goals will be guided by three interrelated strategies:

(a) Evidence-based analysis, drawing on quantitative and qualitative information, the application of appropriate methodologies, and the development of recommendations to assess and inform advocacy and policy action;

(b) Enhanced partnerships with research and policy institutions and development actors, globally and regionally, in developing and industrialized countries;

(c) Communication and leveraging of research findings and recommendations to support policy development and advocacy initiatives through strategic dissemination of studies and contribution to relevant events and forums.

B. Generation and communication of strategic and influential knowledge

61. IRC will generate new knowledge through research and effectively communicate findings to inform the international agenda on children and in support of the mission and work of UNICEF. Research will address three thematic areas: socio-economic policies and child poverty, implementation of international standards on children's rights, and protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation.

62. **Socio-economic policies and child poverty.** Research in this area will aim to increase understanding of the context and impact of socio-economic policies on children. This work will include the identification of policy measures at the national and international levels to reduce child poverty and to leverage resources for the realization of children's rights.

63. Poverty reduction has gained high international priority, as demonstrated by global support for Millennium Development Goal 1 and national poverty reduction strategies. Yet, as IRC research has confirmed, the understanding of the impact of poverty on childhood remains limited. Despite significant advances in analysis in recent years, including by UNICEF and key partners, there is not yet a commonly agreed methodology to assess child poverty in the perspective of children's rights. Further evidence-based research and comparative analysis are needed to understand the manifestations of poverty in children's lives; to inform policy discussions and promote the identification of country-specific time-bound targets for reducing child poverty; and to monitor progress achieved in both developing and developed countries.

64. Guided by these objectives and promoting a strategic brokering role with a network of experts and institutions, IRC research will aim to achieve the following:

(a) Promote a deeper understanding of child poverty as a distinct policy and social issue in developing and industrialized countries, combining evidence-based comparative analysis of economic and social policies with that of the implementation of international human rights standards;

(b) Assess and promote the mobilization of resources for the realization of children's rights, including by assessing options within States' resources and in the context of development assistance, to promote children's universal access to quality basic social services;

(c) Assess the impact on children of migration and other household responses to poverty, including examination of patterns of household migration and the diverse effects on children who are left behind, brought along or migrating on their own.

65. IRC research will pursue a multidisciplinary approach, drawing from the expertise of UNICEF and its partners and from diverse sources, including household surveys (e.g., Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, Demographic and Health Surveys and Living Standards Measurement Studies), expert consultations and discussions with peer academic audiences.

66. **Implementation of international standards for children.** This area of work aims to promote awareness and understanding of international standards on children's rights and influence action to place children's concerns at the centre of national and international agendas, in particular at the legal and institutional levels.

67. The widespread acceptance and implementation of international standards at the national level provide an opportunity to advance this process by generating evidence of their being translated into policy and practice to improve the situation of children. The findings and analyses will help to influence policy and advocacy and inform programme development. This work will support the major thrusts of the MTSP for 2006-2009. The programme will aim to accomplish the following:

(a) Develop research on children's rights to raise awareness of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols and other relevant international standards; consider strategic, emerging topics, including adoption, inter-country adoption and alternatives to institutionalization of children, building on previous work and the experience of critical partners, including the *Istituto degli*

Innocenti, the Council of Europe and the Hague Conference of International Private Law;

(b) Assess, document and analyse the impact of the general measures of implementation of the Convention at the national level, building on the review initiated in the current programme and pursuing dimensions identified for further research, which include the allocation of resources to advance the realization of children's rights; the enhancement of independent national human rights institutions for children, including the role of the global network; the participation of children in decision-making processes; the involvement of critical actors in implementation, including parliamentarians; and the technical dimensions of monitoring progress in these areas;

(c) Document and analyse the implementation of the Convention at the subnational level, building upon IRC experience in the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative and considering children's role in the context of decentralization, including their participation in Children's Municipal Councils;

(d) Support the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and other human rights mechanisms, in particular by informing the Committee's development of General Comments and Thematic Discussions (e.g., on the mobilization of resources for children, early childhood development and juvenile justice), by assisting the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and by contributing to the United Nations Study on Violence against Children and its follow-up process.

68. Research in this area will rely on evidence-based analysis, the exchange and brokering of knowledge, effective communication and the strengthening of partnerships; it will promote synergy and efficient use of human resources from a range of disciplines within and beyond the Centre, including those in UNICEF and other United Nations agencies. A special emphasis will be placed on enhancing the Centre's strategic alliances beyond Europe.

69. **Protection of children from violence, exploitation and abuse.** Work in this area will aim to increase awareness and understanding of children's protection and identify normative and policy responses to promote the safeguarding of their rights.

70. The implementation of the Convention and its Optional Protocols and other relevant international standards, together with the process of follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and the Special Session on Children, has generated an increased visibility to and strong commitment for the protection of child victims from violence, trafficking and sexual exploitation, armed conflict and other situations hampering the realization of their rights. Yet action is still often compromised by the lack of accurate data and evidence-based analysis.

71. IRC will build upon its past research, expertise and strong partnerships in this area within and beyond the United Nations system, strengthening awareness of relevant international standards, promoting evidence-based analysis of child protection normative and policy dimensions and supporting efforts to improve data collection, research methodologies and dissemination of knowledge. These activities will contribute to implementation of the MTSP, including in the areas of advocacy, policy and programme development. The programme will address the following issues:

(a) **Child trafficking,** including for sexual exploitation, in particular by promoting a better understanding of the magnitude and patterns of child trafficking, and assessing normative and policy frameworks designed to ensure child protection at the international, regional, national and subnational levels; the research will expand its regional scope and identify initiatives and lessons to enhance children's protection, including at the community level and by the tourism industry;

(b) **Violence,** including through research to support the United Nations Study on Violence against Children and its follow-up process; IRC will act as a research hub for efforts to identify the numbers of children affected, will promote research on violence and HIV/AIDS and will support UNICEF action to promote the abandonment of FGM/C;

(c) **The impact of armed conflict,** including through research and knowledge-exchange to enhance understanding and implementation of relevant international standards and address knowledge gaps identified by the European Network for a Research Agenda on Children in Armed Conflict (e.g., rule of law and transitional justice, children born from rape during war).

C. Knowledge exchange and brokering

72. IRC will support reflection, debate and cross-fertilization of experiences on children's issues, contributing to international debate and national action in favour of the realization of children's rights. IRC will pursue the following objectives:

(a) Organize and facilitate expert discussions and information exchange with academic and research institutions, policy makers and practitioners and enhance the intellectual leadership of UNICEF, through providing support for the implementation of the MTSP, particularly focus areas 4 and 5, and through addressing emerging and sensitive issues;

(b) Promote the mainstreaming of children's issues at the policy and national level by the United Nations system and development agencies, including in support of the Millennium Agenda (e.g., to promote child poverty as a distinct policy concern in pursuing Millennium Development Goal 1 as well as official development assistance in support of services for children, in relation to Goal 8);

(c) Contribute to the advocacy and policy development of regional institutions and organizations, promoting an enhanced collaboration with European-based institutions and organizations (e.g., EU, Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and OECD); with academic and policy institutions in other regions; and with global organizations (e.g., Inter-Parliamentary Union);

(d) Provide strategic and technical support to national independent institutions for children's rights, including promoting their cooperation through the Global Network of Ombudspersons for Children.

D. Support to the advocacy, policy and programme development of UNICEF

73. IRC will contribute to UNICEF advocacy, policy and programme development, emphasizing the MTSP, the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals and the addressing of emerging and sensitive issues that may inform the future agenda of UNICEF.

74. IRC will pursue the following objectives:

(a) Contribute research and policy analysis to support the global advocacy, policies and strategies of UNICEF, in cooperation with the Programme Group and other parts of the organization;

(b) Promote field-based and policy-oriented research on children's issues, synthesize regional experiences and support country-level advocacy, policy dialogue and capacity-building in close cooperation with UNICEF regions and regional offices; continue to support the monitoring of economic and social policies and their impact on children in the context of transition in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States; build on existing agreements with TACRO and ESARO while expanding collaboration with other regional offices that will serve as hubs for cooperation with regional research and policy institutions; strengthen the analytical capacity of UNICEF offices, including through technical and methodological support on research development, policy analysis and cooperation in specific studies;

(c) Contribute to global advocacy and public awareness in cooperation with UNICEF National Committees, both in support of the Global Campaign on Children and AIDS and through IRC research on children in industrialized countries and studies of global relevance.

E. Securing and strengthening of the Centre's institutional and financial base

75. As an essential support to the above objectives, IRC will pursue these efforts, in cooperation with relevant parts of UNICEF:

(a) Strengthen and further diversify the IRC funding base;

(b) Enhance key institutional partnerships across programme areas.

76. Funding sources and the development of a fund-raising strategy are described in Section F. IRC will continue its close collaboration with the *Istituto degla Innocenti*, especially in support of the joint Innocenti Library, with its resources further expanded to strengthen its use by scholars worldwide and its visibility within Italy. Collaboration will be pursued in areas that include children in armed conflict, adoption, alternatives to institutionalization as well as on the European Network of Children's Observatories (ChildOn). The cooperation will also support the capacity-building and learning activities of UNICEF staff and partners through study visits.

77. IRC cooperation with the Tuscany Region will build on the Agreement of Cooperation renewed in 2004 and will include the translation of major IRC studies into Italian, with financial support from the Region, and support for initiatives and study visits.

78. The Centre will continue to work closely with UNICEF National Committees. IRC will work with the Italian National Committee to organize and support the initiatives on children promoted by the Italian Development Cooperation and the dissemination of IRC studies among Italian institutions.

79. A promising initiative concerns the residence of senior Research Fellows at IRC who will contribute to the Centre's work. Similar arrangements are being considered for the staff of UNICEF, United Nations agencies and partners.

80. IRC will promote more regular interaction, information-exchange and research collaboration with other research institutions, particularly those of the United Nations, including the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the OHCHR research branch and the UNDP Poverty and Governance Centres, to strengthen the contribution of research to United Nations actions and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals within the framework of United Nations reform.

F. Funding and staffing

81. In the framework of the renewal of the Agreement of Cooperation with UNICEF in 2005, the Government of Italy pledged to continue to provide a minimum of approximately $6.5 million to support the core staff and operational costs for the new programme. Additional support will be provided from available resources to strengthen cooperation between IRC and *Istituto degli Innocenti*.

82. The annual core contribution from the Government of Italy has remained stable for the past 17 years, totalling 10.5 billion lire. Due to exchange-rate fluctuations, the dollar value of this contribution has fallen significantly over time, while costs have continued to rise, a trend the Government of Italy has acknowledged and is committed to reverse. The Government has also provided additional funding for specific areas of the IRC programme.

83. In response to this challenging situation and to recommendations of the IAC and of the IRC evaluation, the Centre will continue to make concerted efforts to broaden and further diversify its donor base. During 2003-2005, IRC resource mobilization efforts marked a positive trend in relation to the Executive Board approved ceiling. For the first time, the 2003-2005 core programme received financial support from the Government of Sweden, and other important contributions came from the Governments of Finland, France, Ireland, Japan and Norway, as well as from the OSCE and the Bernard Van Leer and Nuffield foundations. Financial contribution to specific studies came from the National Committees and through cooperation with other UNICEF offices.

84. Increased financial support is anticipated from UNICEF headquarters. In addition, the Government of Sweden has pledged further support for the 2006-2008 programme and discussions will be pursued with other current donors. A fund-raising strategy being developed to support the new programme identifies new sources of research funding.

85. IRC will be structured into three programme units managing the main research areas, with key contributions and major cross-cutting support from the communication and partnerships unit as well as operations. The current staffing

level of 26 posts will be maintained across all categories, with professional posts added if funds become available. IRC will continue to make use of additional expert support and other temporary options to ensure that technical and human resource needs are met.

IV. Draft recommendation

86. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board adopt the following draft recommendation:

The Executive Board,

Having reviewed the progress report on the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre and its proposed activities for 2006-2008 (E/ICEF/2005/13),

1. *Welcomes* the research, advocacy and policy studies conducted by the Centre in the current programme and *endorses* the framework for further work, as contained in E/ICEF/2005/13;

2. *Authorizes* a three-year extension of the Centre's programme for the period 2006-2008 with a total allocation of $17 million in other resources, of which the Government of Italy has pledged to provide a minimum of EUR 5,430,000 (approximately $6.5 million) for the core activities of the Centre, with the remainder to be sought from other donors, including further additional contributions from the Government of Italy, for specific activities.

Estimated breakdown of expenditures (2006-2008)[a]

(In thousands of United States dollars)

	2006	*2007*	*2008*	*Total*
Programme costs				
Research in current and emerging programme areas, monitoring, policy analysis, expert workshops, networking, research management[b]	4 000	4 000	4 000	12 000
Advocacy and communication, publications, documentation and website	600	600	600	1 800
Collaboration with *Istituto degli Innocenti*	330	330	340	1 000
Subtotal	**4 930**	**4 930**	**4 940**	**14 800**
Operating costs				
Support staff costs	370	375	390	1 135
General operating costs (information technology, communications, supplies, maintenance, equipment)	330	360	375	1 065
Subtotal	**700**	**735**	**765**	**2 200**
Total	**5 630**	**5 665**	**5 705**	**17 000**[c]

[a] The three-year contribution from the Government of Italy is 5.4 million euros, the equivalent of $6.5 million at the July 2005 exchange rate, with the remainder to be sought from other donors, including further additional contribution from the Government of Italy.

[b] The Director's post and travel costs are funded from the support budget of regular resources.

[c] Less 1 per cent approved rate of recovery of UNICEF incremental operating costs for other resources-funded projects.